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With a Forged Memo, The Soviets Counterattack

Sudden publication in Warsaw's major Communist Party newspaper of a forged March 13, 1978, memorandum from Zbigniew Brzezinski to President Carter, detailing a plan to destabilize Poland, looks like the start of a desperate Soviet defense in the case of the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II.

The forged "top secret" communication to Carter from his national security adviser was a detailed plan on how the then-rising discontent against Poland's communist regime could be joined to Poland's powerful Catholic Church to create revolutionary turmoil. The U.S. objective, the forged Brzezinski memorandum told Carter, was to pull Poland out of the Soviet orbit.

Soviet specialists here regard the sudden publication of the spurious memorandum five years after it was purportedly written by Brzezinski as having two purposes: deflecting attention from the U.S. media campaign charging Soviet complicity in the pope's attempted murder in 1981; and providing new "evidence" against Solidarity leaders soon to be put on trial in Warsaw for crimes against the Polish state.

Soviet disinformation gambits are scarcely unusual. What sets the Brzezinski-Carter forgery apart is its veiled implication that Brzezinski's alleged plot to destabilize Poland included the installation of Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtyla as the first Polish leader of the Catholic Church.

Top State Department officials have not yet decided whether to publicly denounce the forgery. It was apparently first published recently in a center/left-wing Madrid weekly, *El Tiempo*, then picked up by the Washington correspondent of *Zycie Warszawy* and published in that newspaper last month under a Washington dateline.

The sequence of events leading up to the for-

gery—a sophisticated job obviously done by the KGB in the last few months and then backdated five years—strongly argues for the Reagan administration to expose and denounce it. Shortly after the October 1978 election of Pope John Paul II, U.S. intelligence agents uncovered an undoubtedly authentic but wholly erroneous KGB analysis portraying in elaborate detail how the U.S. had plotted to elevate the Polish cardinal to pope.

According to this KGB analysis, Brzezinski, a native of Poland, and Cardinal John Krol of Philadelphia, an ethnic Pole, were alleged to have organized the American cardinals to vote in a bloc for Cardinal Wojtyla when the College of Cardinals met in the Vatican in mid-October for the papal election.

Further, the Carter administration, with Brzezinski leading the way, was portrayed by the KGB as cultivating West German Catholic leaders to line up behind Wojtyla. The purpose, as the KGB reported it back to then-KGB chief Yuri Andropov and the Kremlin, was to set the stage for anti-Soviet revolt in Poland and "reconciliation" between Poland and West Germany.

Intelligence specialists who have read this KGB analysis told us its authenticity is beyond question. Even though its purpose could have been disinformation, it appears to have been based on no facts at all. Nothing in the written record of either Carter or Brzezinski bears remote resemblance to the KGB analysis. Brzezinski's recently published memoirs, "Power and Principle," mention Pope John Paul II only twice, saying he was "struck" in his second meeting with "how political the pope's thinking was."

Now that the Polish Communist Party's principal newspaper has published the forged Brzezinski memorandum to Carter, most officials believe an American response is needed. If not, the implication that the U.S. government embarked on a deliberate course of intervention into the most intimate affairs of the papacy offers Andropov a counterattack to charges of Soviet complicity in the attempt to murder the pope. Indeed, Andropov's attack on Ronald Reagan last weekend as a "liar" may have been intended to set the stage for just such a counterattack.